

**FOSTER SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING  
CAPTAIN ISAAC PAINE SCHOOL CAFETERIA  
April 28, 2009**

**Executive Session - 6:30 PM  
Open Session – 7:00PM**

**1. CONVENE MEETING:**

The Chairperson called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

**2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**3. ROLL CALL:**

Chairman Ron Cervasio, Vice Chair Cindy Bernard, and Member Dennis Chretien were present. Mr. Piccirilli, Legal Counsel and Mrs. McCullough, School Committee secretary were also present.

**4. EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

On a motion by Mrs. Bernard and seconded by Mr. Chretien, the School Committee voted to convene into Executive Session per R.I.G.L. 42-46-5 at 6:36 pm to consider (a) Personnel (2) Collective Bargaining and Litigation. Motion passed. 3-0-0.

On a motion by Mr. Chretien and seconded by Mrs. Bernard, the School Committee voted to recess and go into Open session at 7:10 pm pm. Motion passed. 3-0-0.

The Chair, Mr. Cervasio, reconvened Open Session at 7:12 pm. Mr. Cervasio relayed that the School Committee had recessed and would go back into Executive Session at the end of the Open meeting and that no votes were taken.

**5. APPOINTMENT OF INTERIM-SUPERINTENDENT**

The School Committee said this item would be tabled for now.

**6. RECOMMENDATION COMMITTEE - APPOINTMENT / REVIEW**

Mr. Cervasio said that this Committee needs to have a one month turn around. Mr. Cervasio said there were a lot of qualified people, approximately 17 to 18 applications. Mr. Cervasio asked Mr. Chretien not to sit on this Committee, that way the Committee could place a PTG member. Mr. Chretien said he would like to sit on the Committee. Mrs. Bernard disagreed with Mr. Cervasio's time limit.

On a motion by Mrs. Bernard and seconded by Mr. Chretien the Committee voted to appoint the following taxpayers of Foster as a subcommittee of the Foster School Committee. The subcommittee, known as the Administrative Review Committee, will investigate, review administrative configurations for the positions of Principal and Superintendent or the position of Superintendent/Principal. The subcommittee will seek advice, information, and assistance from current, past, and past officials, employees, community members and other sources deemed necessary. The School Committee will direct personnel under its capacity, to provide assistance and information to the subcommittee. The Administration Review Committee will report its findings and recommendations to the Foster School Committee no later than June 19, 2009, at which

time the subcommittee terms will expire. Mr. Cervasio amended the motion by asking that the Review Committee report as soon as June 7<sup>th</sup> Mrs. Bernard seconded. At this time a member from the audience suggested that the Committee advertise the positions at this time to be prepared with applicants when they receive the Administrative Review Committees recommendations. Motion failed. 1-2-0.

Vote as follows:

Mr. Cervasio - yes

Mrs. Bernard - no

Mr. Chretien - no

The June 19th report date stands. Motion passed. 2-1-0.

Vote as follows:

Mr. Cervasio - no

Mrs. Bernard - yes

Mr. Chretien - yes

On a motion by Mrs. Bernard and seconded by Mr. Cervasio the Committee voted to appoint the following individuals to the Administrative Review Sub Committee: Matt Cook, Patricia Fountain, Scott Bellem, Neil Whitelaw, Robert Hohler, Robert Van Meter and Dennis Chretien. Discussion followed. Motion passed. 2-1-0.

Vote as follows:

Mr. Cervasio - yes

Mrs. Bernard - yes

Mr. Chretien - no

## **7. REQUESTS TO USE SCHOOL FACILITIES**

On a motion by Mr. Chretien and seconded by Mrs. Bernard the School Committee voted to accept the Building Use Requests from the Boy Scouts for sign ups and the Foster Emergency Shelter Team for an Emergency Shelter Simulation. Motion passed. 3-0-0.

## **8. TECHNOLOGY**

Mr. Chretien spoke to the future of the schools and how technology can help establish a better connection and communication between the elementary, middle and high schools without regionalization. He spoke of the possibility of sharing services. The high school and middle school have installed an IT system and phone system that could also support all the elementary schools.

Mr. Cervasio assigned Mr. Chretien to the task of finding the dollars and coordinating the technology with curriculum and the possibility of every student having computers and or laptops at certain grade levels. Mr. Cervasio would like to use the 'surplus' dollars to accomplish the task. Mr. Chretien disagreed and felt it was irresponsible to use the 'surplus' for this task in case there is a need for a special need student to be out-sourced or catastrophe of some kind. He felt that pursuing grants was a better solution.

No motions were made.

## **10. NECAP TEST SCORES**

Mrs. Karen Seitler, test coordinator, presented the test scores from the testing in the fall required by the State in Reading, Writing and Math. For the most part the test scores were up from last year. Mr. Chretien thanked Mrs. Seitler, teachers and students for their hard work and accomplishment. Mrs. Dixon, third grade teacher, thought the parents should be thanked also as they are big contributors to the success of the students. Mr. Cervasio stated that it is the job of everyone to raise expectations.

## **11. 2009-2010 BUDGET**

Mr. Chretien recapped the issues facing the School Committee for next year's budget. He explained that Mr. Wallace, Superintendent at that time, had produced a zero percent increase due to the Certified and Non-certified Unions agreeing to a pay freeze for 2009-2010. The Town Council implied the possibility of decreasing the budget another \$94,000 as the anticipated increase in Blue Cross / Blue Shield was not taking place and also pension reform. If the legislature doesn't pass pension reform the Town Council said they would make up the pension reform for the budget. Mr. Chretien felt that level funding the budget would affect the TARP funds next year and every subsequent year after. The TARP funds have many restrictions. The local dollars would have to be used to make of the deficiencies. The State will not make up the loss of funds from the stimulus money and so the school department will keep losing monetary support.

## **12. FORMATION OF MINUTES**

Mrs. Bernard requested this item be taken off the agenda.

## **13. SCHOOL COMMITTEE PROCEDURES**

On a motion by Mrs. Bernard to implement School Committee procedures:

The School Committee will open and discuss agenda item.

After discussion from the Committee, the chair may open discussion to the public.

Upon recognition by the Chair, an individual will provide his or her name and residence.

Comments or questions must pertain to the agenda item under discussion.

To allow all persons to comment, individuals will be limited to three (3) minutes.

The School Committee will discuss, end or vote on the agenda item.

The Chair may have a continuously disruptive person removed from the room. (R.I.G.L. 42-46-5d - this chapter shall not prohibit the removal of any person who willfully disrupts a meeting to the extent that orderly conduct of the meeting is seriously compromised.)

Mr. Cervasio seconded the motion. A discussion followed.

Mr. Picirilli, Legal Counsel suggested the School Committee have copies to hand out at their next meeting for attendees.

Motion passed. 2-1-0.

Vote as follows:

Mr. Cervasio - yes

Mrs. Bernard - yes

Mr. Chretien - no

#### **14. BUDGET FORMAT**

Mrs. Bernard explained that she had asked for this to be on the February agenda but it wasn't discussed and asked for this item to be taken off the agenda.

#### **15. INFORMATION LETTER**

On a motion by Mrs. Bernard to distribute a Town wide informational flyer to consist of data for the Foster School District; The information will consist of existing programs, population, budget information, staff teaching information, contact numbers of School Committee and Administration people and other relevant people information. The information will be placed in the Bargain Buyer or Foster Home Journal; this will be decided on price. After discussion it was decided to post to the school's web site.

Motion passed. 2-1-0.

Vote as follows:

Mr. Cervasio - no (if there is a business expense)

Mrs. Bernard - yes

Mr. Chretien - yes

#### **16. SNOW BLOWER - PURCHASE**

On a motion by Mr. Chretien and seconded by Mrs. Bernard the School Committee voted to purchase a snow blower on the recommendation of Mr. McGovern, Maintenance Supervisor. Motion passed. 3-0-0.

#### **17. SCHOOL COMMITTEE CLERK**

On a motion by Mr. Chretien and seconded by Mrs. Bernard the School Committee voted to continue using Mrs. Helena McCullough as their School Committee Clerk. Motion passed. 3-0-0.

#### **18. RFP FOR FOOD SERVICES**

On a motion by Mr. Chretien and seconded by Mrs. Bernard the School Committee voted to "piggy back" the RFP for food services with the Region. Motion passed. 3-0-0

#### **19. MOVING OF BUSINESS OFFICE**

Mr. Cervasio's intention is to carry forward and combine services with the Region for the Business Office. The Committee decided to move item #22 "Human Resource Sharing" up on the Agenda. Mr. Chretien believes that by sharing similar services costs can be reduced. An example he gave was sharing the Superintendent this past year. This helps coordinate curriculum, improve communication, technology support, and building and

grounds and sharing the Business Office. There is a committee looking at some of the sharing costs and what the savings would be.

Mr. Cervasio mentioned a meeting he coordinated in February with all the Principals, Curriculum Coordinators, Superintendents and School Committee members. For three thousand students for two towns, there was million dollars worth of Administration at the meeting. If the towns had voted to regionalize which seventy to eighty percent of the town did not want, the town might have saved eight hundred thousand, now we are talking about saving pennies because it's a good idea. All the people that were against full regionalization are now seeing the benefits to shared services. Mr. Cervasio is for shared services. By not voting for full regionalization it cost the town over three point three (3.3) million dollars over twenty years. A motion by Mr. Chretien and seconded by Mrs. Bernard the School Committee voted to look into whether we should move the Business Office and look into cost, quality, and all the things Dennis Chretien talked about. Mr. Cervasio volunteered to look into this issue. Motion passed. 3-0-0.

## **20. SPECIAL EDUCATION STAFFING POLICY - SECOND READING**

On a motion by Mr. Chretien and seconded by Mrs. Bernard the School Committee voted to adopt the second reading of the Special Education Staffing Policy. Mr. Magner, Special Education Director, explained that the policy provides a host of assurances for meeting all the special education needs for students by maintaining highly qualified teachers, support staff, and providing professional development activities. The policy will be posted on the web site and open for thirty (30) days for comments. Motion passed. 3-0-0.

## **21. COMMUNICATIONS**

None.

## **22. FOSTER / GLOCESTER HUMAN RESOURCE SHARING**

Moved up on the agenda to item #19 for combined discussion.

## **23. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT**

Mr. Gary Moore shared with the School Committee that Mrs. Jones and her students celebrated Music in Our Schools Month by holding performances for the school and parents. The "Virtual Backpack" was in effect and would help stop double notices to families. However at the request of a family, hard copy notices would still be provided. The last reward for "Box tops" will be a Carnival Day held on Monday, June 22, 2009. The School will begin planning and preparing for the event as we get closer to our goal. On May 8th the fourth grade will visit the State House as part of their Rhode Island studies. At the recent Learning Celebration two students, from Mrs. Dixon's third grade class, recited the Gettysburg Address.

## **24. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

None.

## **25. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Parent, Shelley Pezza, asked Mr. Cervasio to retract his statement about teachers participating in petition that was published in the Bargain Buyer. Ms. Pezza asked the School Committee if it was okay for her daughter to make a statement to the School Committee in regards to Mr. Cervasio's statement. The Committee agreed.

The student told the School Committee that she asked teachers if it was okay to approach students in their class to sign the petition that went around last month. If a teacher said no, then she did not approach those students or enter the classroom.

Another citizen asked how the School Committees attorney was being paid.

## **26. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

On a motion by Mr. Chretien and seconded by Mrs. Bernard, the School Committee voted to accept the Minutes from March 24, 2009, March 31, 2009 and April 7, 2009 open and executive sessions. Motion passed. 3-0-0.

## **27. APPROVAL OF WARRANTS**

On a motion by Mr. Chretien and seconded by Mr. Cervasio the School Committee approved payment of \$73,841.26 for First Student. Motion passed. 2-0-1.

Vote as follows:

Mr. Cervasio - yes

Mrs. Bernard - recued

Mr. Chretien - yes

On a motion by Mrs. Bernard and seconded by Mr. Chretien the School Committee voted to accept the remainder of the Warrant in the amount of \$104,813.60.

Motion passed. 3-0-0.

## **28. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

Administrative Review Committee

Appointment of Interim-Superintendent

2009-2010 Budget

School Calendar - 2009-2010

## **RECESS INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION**

At this point the School Committee recessed into Executive Session at 9:05 pm.

At 9:50 pm the School Committee reconvened to Open Session. Mr. Cervasio confirmed there were no votes taken, no one was hired, and the Committee will continue with interviews.

On a motion by Mrs. Bernard and seconded by Mr. Chretien the School Committee voted to seal the Executive Minutes. Motion passed. 2-1-0.

Vote as follows:

Mrs. Cervasio - yes

Mrs. Bernard - yes

Mr.Chretien - no

## **29. ADJOURNMENT**

On a motion by Mr. Chretien and seconded by Mrs. Bernard the School Committee voted to adjourn at 9:55 pm. Motion passed. 3-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Helena McCullough  
School Committee Clerk